

SALT REDUCTION WORKGROUP

- Minutes -

Thursday, April 17, 2008

3:00 to 6:00 pm

Londonderry Municipal Buildings

268 B Mammoth Road

Londonderry, N.H.

ATTENDEES:

Janusz Czyzowski,	DPW Town of Londonderry	Jaime Sikora,	Federal Highway Admin.
Rick Russell,	DPW Town of Salem	Carl DeLoi,	EPA
Dave Wholley,	DPW Town of Salem	Douglas Heath,	EPA
Alan Cote,	DPW Town of Derry	John LeLacheur,	N.H. State Police
David Poulson,	DPW Town of Windham	Kathy DesRoches,	UNH T2 Center
Jack McCartney,	DPW Town of Windham	Stuart Thompson	
Paul Currier,	N.H. DES	Bill Archieri,	VHB
Barbara McMillan,	N.H. DES	Owen Williams,	Freshwater Farms
Eric Williams,	N.H. DES	David Preece,	Southern N.H. RPC.
Mark Hemmerlein,	N.H. DOT	?	NH Lakes Association
Caleb Dobbins,	N.H. DOT	Arthur Cunningham	NH Sierra Club
Pamela Mitchell,	N.H. DOT	Tom Irwin	Conservation Law Foundation
Lyle Knowlton	N.H. DOT	Steve Whitman,	Jeffrey H. Taylor & Assoc.
Bill Cass,	N.H. DOT		

Invited but unable to attend

Joe Paradis,	Londonderry Town Council	Matt Merrill,	Condominium Manager
Dave Sullivan,	Windham Town Administrator	Ryan Carr,	RG Carr LLC
Everett McBride,	Salem Board of Selectman	Mike Oleson,	DPW Town of Chester
Harland Eaton,	Auburn Board of Selectman	Steve Williams,	Nashua RPC
Mark Harris,	Chester Board of Selectman	Cliff Sinnott,	Rockingham RPC
Michael Dross,	DPW Town of Auburn	Phil Trowbridge,	N.H. DES
Nick Wallner,	AAA	Myra Schwartz,	EPA
Robert Sculley,	Motor Transport Association		
Steve Kahl,	Plymouth State Univ.		

MEETING MINUTES

Introductions

Steve Whitman of Jeffrey H. Taylor and Associates welcomed everyone, and led the participants through introductions and a review of the agenda.

Overview of Report 2 to the Salt Reduction Workgroup

Steve Whitman presented some background on the purpose of the two reports to the Workgroup. Whitman then presented an overview of the format and key findings identified by the various research methodologies summarized in the report. Report 2 has been circulated to the Workgroup and some comments have been received. Whitman

explained that the comments will be used to refine this information and guide the development of the Department of Environmental Services TMDL Implementation Plan later this year. Additional comments on Report 2 are welcome, and the participants were encouraged to take another look at the document and share their thoughts.

Carl DeLoi asked about the finding related to liability. Whitman explained how that item was brought to the Workgroup's attention by Owen Williams at a Workgroup Meeting in 2007. Alan Cote added that it would take legislation to accomplish this limited liability, and it may be difficult to do. Janusz Czyzowski felt that this item was mentioned, but not identified by the group as an item they wanted to pursue.

Review and Discussion of the Earmark Document

Mark Hemmerlein presented an overview of the draft framework for distributing the federal earmark. The full presentation is available at:
<http://www.rebuildingi93.com/content/environmental/waterquality/saltreduction/>.

Hemmerlein explained that this funding is available to aid the identified communities with salt reduction activities. This will require a municipal agreement with the NH Department of Transportation and a 20% match for any funds received. The level of funding each community will receive is related to the amount of salt reduction work that needs to happen in their portion of the watersheds. This funding is based on data from the TMDLs for FY 2005. Regional efforts have also been suggested.

Eric Williams clarified that these calculations include the reduction needed on municipal and private lots. Doug Heath asked if the Earmark would only be used by the municipalities. Hemmerlein explained that the remaining earmark would be given to the municipalities and possibly used on regional initiatives. DOT and DES have already used a portion of the earmark for studies and monitoring, and will not be looking to use any of the remaining earmark funds.

Dave Poulson asked if the towns could use their allocation for the construction of a salt shed. Hemmerlein clarified that the money needs to be spent on reduction activities within the watersheds, and such a facility would not likely qualify if it were not located in that area. Carl DeLoi asked about the possibility of some base funding to each community and then the remainder being distributed using this formula. Hemmerlein said that option was considered.

Hemmerlein then explained that this effort will be administered by the DOT through municipal agreements, and that the first phase will be for planning. This planning phase will involve 8% of the allocation to each community, but a letter to proceed must be received from the DOT prior to starting this phase. The entire program will expire in four years.

Review and Discussion of the Funding Criteria

Mark Hemmerlein then presented an overview of the draft criteria that have been developed to guide this earmark distribution. Having heard some objections prior to the start of the meeting, Steve Whitman asked for feedback from the participants on the Municipal Resolution requirement. Alan Cote expressed his objection, and a general concern over the communities need to commit to a long term expense and activities they may not want to pursue. Representatives from the other communities agreed. Eric Williams clarified that the resolution is only representing a commitment from the community to work with the other agencies on salt reduction efforts. This clarification made the communities more comfortable with the idea of a municipal resolution as part of this process.

Arthur Cunningham suggested this effort be used to get some real enforcement on salt use. Hemmerlein then explained another criteria to track salt use and how this data will be able to inform future efforts related to education or enforcement. John LeLaucher asked if the funding can be used by the towns to hire someone. Hemmerlein and others replied that the funds could be used for staff.

Questions were raised about the long term commitment by towns to this effort considering there will only be four years of funding. Eric Williams explained that DES also has questions about how this effort will progress long term, but that the tracking program and some assistance from DES will hopefully make this easier.

Doug Heath asked if the soft match can include labor. Several agency representatives replied that it could. Hemmerlein then explained that another criteria would be a 50% limit on the use of these funds for equipment or infrastructure. Rick Russell suggested a 75% limit for infrastructure and equipment makes more sense. Janusz Czyzowski added that an 80% limit would be even better. Steve Whitman addressed these suggestions stating that the regional efforts related to education and training might make this adjustment possible. Kathy DesRoches added that a 50/50 split does not make much sense for the smaller towns.

Hemmerlein went on to explain the remaining criteria. Tom Irwin suggested that there should be some flexibility within the framework so that the Steering Committee can push funding toward the most promising initiatives. Hemmerlein explained that there is flexibility, and that each community has different needs related to salt reduction efforts. Whitman added that if a community does not find a way to spend their entire allocation it will be available for other efforts in the other communities.

David Preece asked what will happen once the earmark has been spent, and if this could be used as a longer term program. Hemmerlein explained that this is a one time earmark from Federal Highway.

David Poulson asked how the water quality component comes into play. Hemmerlein explained the commitment to long term monitoring over the next ten years. Paul Currier

then explained the concentrations of salt found in the groundwater and the uncertainty about how long it will take to see an improvement. The process will continue however until the water quality standards are met.

Hemmerlein explained that each community needs to examine what they can do that will be effective for them. There was a discussion about the need to work on reductions in the portions of the community in the Watershed, and various ways to accomplish this. Arthur Cunningham asked about the possibility of focusing on “hot spots” rather than the percent formula. Paul Currier explained that there is a need for better understanding of how salt is being applied and where the real trouble spots are in each town. Dave Poulson added that you can’t focus on hot spots because this needs to be a comprehensive approach.

Discussion of the Municipal Resolution

Eric Williams addressed the draft municipal resolution discussed earlier in the meeting, and clarified that this represents a commitment to move forward and work on salt reduction efforts with the State and others. Williams asked for thought or edits to the document. Rick Russell explained that the initial feedback he received from a Board member in Salem was negative, but after today’s discussion he has different impression of what this resolution represents. Russell then requested that the resolution be clarified so that it is clear that the Town is just agreeing to commit to further cooperation on this issue. The idea of using Sunday sale permits to get information out to the private lot owners was then suggested.

Janusz Czyzowski asked what “significantly” means in the language. Williams explained that it is used in a “whereas” statement to set the tone, and we need to focus more on the two commitment items in the language. Czyzowski asked if this is mandatory, and Williams replied that it is if the town wants to receive their portion of the earmark. Czyzowski then asked several questions on the 20% match. Williams and others explained the potential for use of soft match which could include staff time. Dave Poulson added that calling it a resolution rather than just an application might make selling it locally more of a challenge in Windham.

Carl DeLoi added that if he were selling it at the local level he would explain the environmental component, the money saved by reducing salt use, and the potential for additional violations on the horizon. Caleb Dobbins noted that Dinsmore Watershed needs to be added to the Resolution text.

Discussion of the Potential Regional Initiatives

Eric Williams then started a discussion about the potential for regional initiatives using \$500, 000 of the earmark funds. This would include the development of a salt accounting system, education and training for the towns and private maintenance professionals, and social marketing efforts. Williams then introduced Kathy DesRoches of T2 at UNH to explain what they could offer related to education and training, and the salt accounting

program. DesRoches gave an overview of T2, and explained several ways they have considered for getting the private folks involved. For the tracking of salt use they recommend the use of a Windows based program, and several other ways to provide the information to the towns. Contractors could use a paper form, email, or even text from a cell phone. DesRoches asked if the group was interested in annual reporting or by event. This lead to a discussion on the pros and cons of both. Steve Whitman suggested that the annual approach be used, and that the towns work with individuals willing to report on an event basis too. This approach was supported, and Dave Wholley then added that using a certificate process that would show they are “environmentally friendly” would also get them onboard.

DesRoches explained that they are also looking into parking lot owner outreach and general public awareness. The use of mandatory certification was then suggested by several attendees. Owen Williams explained that training the contractors to use less product and save money will get their attention. Picking a good time of day for training depending on the season will be important. John Lelacheur suggested that the Workgroup consider having materials available to contractors when they apply for their “amber light” permit through the DMV.

Tom Irwin asked if porous pavement could be an option to pursue. The response was yes. There was support from the group for pursuing these regional initiatives, and enthusiasm for working with T2.

Eric Williams then introduced Barbara McMillan to present ideas on outreach and social marketing initiatives. McMillan explained that it was too early to know what specific activities would be part of this initiative, but that it is an opportunity for collaboration and for a consistent message. If this initiative is supported by the towns DES will seek someone with expertise in Social Marketing to assist the towns. Attitude and behavior change of the driving public is the goal.

McMillan also explained the work DES will be completing as part of the TMDL Implementation Plan. This plan will be based on the work in Report 2, the town implementation plans, and assistance from a steering committee.

Discussion of the Reduction Ratios by Sector

Mark Hemmerlein presented an overview of the best management practices that DOT has been employing, and some data on where salt is applied and how many vehicles it serves. The full presentation is available at:

<http://www.rebuildingi93.com/content/environmental/waterquality/saltreduction/>.

Hemmerlein showed the various changes DOT has made, and the reductions they have been able to document. Several of the practices generated discussion related to how useful they may be on local roads or parking lots. At the conclusion of the discussion Caleb Dobbins offered to host the town representatives at the Derry shed in the near future so they can have a closer look at the equipment.

Next Steps and Meeting Schedule

Steve Whitman closed the meeting by thanking all of the participants and suggesting that new versions of these documents be circulated by email. At that time each participant will be asked to provide any additional feedback and acknowledge if they can live with the framework for the earmark distribution. The next meeting is scheduled for July, but meeting sooner may be necessary to get things underway.